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*A Letter from the Mahdi Muhammad Ahmad to General C. G. Gordon.* — By GEORGE SVERDRUP JR., Professor in Augsburg Seminary, Minneapolis, Minn.

This letter from the Mahdi to General Gordon is found in a manuscript belonging to the collection of Arabic manuscripts made by Count Landberg, and presented to the Yale University Library in the year 1900 by Mr. Morris K. Jesup. The manuscript in question is a collection of letters, or rather copies of letters, written by the Mahdi on various occasions. It is a companion volume to one which is in the possession of the Egyptian Intelligence Office in Cairo. Some of the letters found in the Yale manuscript are also found in the Cairo manuscript. It differs from the Cairo manuscript in this, that it contains no letters of other dignitaries as the Cairo one does. The Cairo manuscript was captured in the battle of Toski, August 3, 1889. Just where or how Count Landberg obtained possession of this manuscript the writer has been unable to discover.

The Yale manuscript is paged continuously up to page 503, of which the last nine lines are blank. Pages 251—352 are missing, i. e. five quinion gatherings. There are in all 21 gatherings; four quaternions, and the rest quinions. The pages have 20 lines. The dimensions of the manuscript are nine and one eighth by six and three eighths inches; the written surface seven and one eighth by four and five-eighths inches. At the bottom of every odd-numbered page there is a catch-word. Count Landberg has added a table of contents.

In the manuscript there are 148 letters and proclamations each beginning with the phrase: "In the name of God the Merciful" &c. The *الحمد لله* and the beginning word of quotations from the Koran are written with red ink. No chronological order is followed in the arrangement of the documents. The dates are missing from many of the letters, among which is also the Gordon letter. In his appended "Régistre" Count

Landberg says: "fort à regretter est cette omission surtout dans la lettre intéressante, adressée à Gordon pacha". This omission can be supplied, at least for the date on which Gordon received the letter, as will be shown. The Gordon letter is found on pages 470—475 of the manuscript.

The bibliography for the history of the Sudan for the period 1880 - 1900 is large, especially in periodical literature. Attention here is called only to the very important sources. First of all are the British Government "Blue Books". The most important then are: *The Journals of General C. G. Gordon, C. B., at Khartoum*, printed from the original manuscript with an Introduction and Notes by A. Egmont Hake, Boston 1885; *Letters of General C. G. Gordon to his sister M. A. Gordon*, London, 1888; *Fire and Sword in the Sudan, 1879—1895*, by Rudolf C. Slatin, C. B., translated by F. R. Wingate, London 1896; *A Prisoner of the Khaleefa* (Twelve Years Captivity at Omdurman), by Charles Neufeld, London, 1899; *Ten Years Captivity in the Mahdi's Camp*, by Father Joseph Ohrwalder; *The Life of Gordon*, by Demetrius C. Bulger, two vol. s, London, 1896; *Mahdism and the Egyptian Sudan*, by Major F. R. Wingate, D. S. O., R. A., 1891; and *Modern Egypt*, by the Earl of Cromer, two vol. s, New York, 1908. Lord Cromer's appreciation of General Gordon is far from impartial; but his book throws much light upon the many misunderstandings between these two men. In Arabic there is the important تاريخ السودان by Na'oum Bey Shoucair, Chef de Bureau in the Agent-General's Office in Cairo, printed in Cairo, 1904. Na'oum Bey Shoucair undoubtedly had much to do with gathering the material for Wingate's book. At any rate the two are very similar in plan and contents.

## The Text of the Letter (Arab. ms. Yale 543).

470<sup>17</sup> بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الْوَالِي الْكَرِيمِ وَالصَّلَاةُ  
 عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ مَعَ التَّسْلِيمِ<sup>18</sup> وَبَعْدَ فَمِنْ الْعَبْدِ الْمُفْتَقِرِ  
 لِمَوْلَاةِ مُحَمَّدٍ الْمُطَهِّدِيِّ بْنِ السَّيِّدِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ إِلَى<sup>a</sup> بَرِيطَانِيَةِ الْخِدْيَوِيَّةِ  
<sup>19</sup> غَرْدُونَ بِأَسْمَا نُعْلِمُكَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى مَعَ حِلْمِهِ وَكَرَمِهِ يَمَكُلُ  
 وَلَا يُهْلِكُ وَلَا يَرُدُّ بِأُ<sup>20</sup> سَهْ عَنْ الْقَوْمِ الْمُجْرِمِينَ وَهُوَ وَلِيُّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ  
 قَالَ تَعَالَى (\*) اللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يُخْرِجُهُمْ<sup>4711</sup> مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ  
 إِلَى النُّورِ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَوْلِيَاؤُهُمُ الظُّلُمَاتُ يُخْرِجُونَهُمْ مِنَ النُّورِ  
 إِلَى الظُّلُمَاتِ<sup>2</sup> أُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ<sup>b</sup> وَقَدْ نَوَّهَ فِي  
 الْقُرْآنِ الْمَجِيدِ وَغَيْرِهِ مِنْ كُتُبِهِ الْقَدِيمَةِ<sup>8</sup> وَعَلَى لِسَانِ كُلِّ رَسُولٍ  
 وَنَبِيِّ وَآمِينَ فِي دِينِهِ يَكُذِّمُ الدُّنْيَا وَحَذِّرُ مِنْهَا الْعُقَلَاءَ وَدَعَاهُمْ<sup>4</sup> إِلَى  
 الْآخِرَةِ وَرَبَّعَهُمْ فِيهَا لِأَنَّهَا دَارُ الْبَقَاءِ وَالْعِزِّ وَالشَّرَفِ وَالْجَاهِ الْوَسِيعِ  
 وَالْمَقَامِ الرَّفِيعِ<sup>5</sup> وَالْمَنْزِلِ الشَّامِعِ وَالْعَيْشِ الْهَنِي كَمَا يَشْعُرُ بِهِذِهِ  
 كُلِّهَا قَوْلُهُ تَعَالَى \*اعْلَمُوا أَنَّهَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا<sup>6</sup> لَعِبٌ وَلَهْوٌ وَزِينَةٌ وَتَفَاخُرٌ  
 بَيْنَكُمْ وَتَكَاثُرٌ فِي الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَوْلَادِ كَمَثَلِ غَيْثٍ أَعْجَبَ الْكُفَّارَ<sup>7</sup> نَبَاتُهُ  
 ثُمَّ يَهْبِيجُ فَتَرَاهُ مُصْفَرًّا ثُمَّ يَكُونُ حُطَامًا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ  
 وَمَغْفِرَةٌ<sup>8</sup> مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانٌ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ سَابِقُوا  
 إِلَى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا<sup>9</sup> كَعَرْضِ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ أُعِدَّتْ  
 لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ  
 ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ<sup>10</sup> فَمَدْلُولُ الْآيَاتِ يَفْهَمُ أَنَّ الْمُدْرِي<sup>e</sup> عَلَى صِدْقِ  
 الْإِيمَانِ بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ أَنَّهُ الْمُقَرَّبُ إِلَى اللَّهِ زُلْفَى وَالْمَوْجِبُ لِرِضَايِهِ  
 وَالسَّبَبُ لِعَطَائِهِ وَنَيْلِ<sup>12</sup> مَا تَهْوَاهُ الْأَنْفُسُ وَتَلَدُّ الْأَعْيُنُ وَأَنَّهُ لَا يَنْجُوا  
 أَحَدٌ مِنْ بَلَائِهِ وَشَفَائِهِ وَمِنْ كُلِّ الرَّدَى<sup>13</sup> دُنْيَا وَآخِرَى إِلَّا بِهِ مَعَ  
 الْخَوْفِ الشَّدِيدِ مِنْ غَضَبِهِ وَزُهْدِهِ هَذِهِ<sup>f</sup> الدُّنْيَا وَحَيَاتُهَا<sup>14</sup> وَعُدْمُ الْوُثُوقِ

<sup>a</sup> Supply والى؟  
 5719-21.

<sup>b</sup> Sura 2258-259.

<sup>c</sup> كله. ms.

<sup>d</sup> Sura

<sup>e</sup> ms. المدرا.

<sup>f</sup> ms. هذا.

بها اذ هي زائِلَةٌ حَسْبِيسَةٍ ساحرة خداعة ليس فيها راحة ولا نعيم<sup>15</sup> بِالنَّسَبَةِ الى ما عند الله مِنَ الْخَيْرِ الْجَسِيمِ في دار النعيم بل مَنْ أَحَبَّهَا وَأَتْرَاهَا عَلَى الْآخِرَةِ أَكْبَهُهُ اللَّهُ فِي أَجْلِ النَّارِ بِدَلِيلِ قَوْلِهِ تَعَالَى \* فَأَمَّا مَنْ طَغَى وَآثَرَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا فَإِنَّ<sup>17</sup> الْجَحِيمَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَى<sup>١٦</sup> ومعلوم أَنَّهُ لَا طَائِلَ تَحْتَ جَاهِ الدُّنْيَا وَحَيَاتِهَا وَمَتَاعِهَا وَأَمُورِهَا<sup>18</sup> إِلَّا الْحَسْرَةُ الطَّوِيلَةُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ وَلِذَاكَ جَاءَ مِنْ سَيِّدِنَا عِيسَى بْنِ مَرْيَمَ عَلَى نَبِيِّنَا وَعَلَيْهِ<sup>19</sup> صَلَاةُ اللَّهِ وَسَلَامُهُ أَنَّهُ قَالَ يَمَعْشَرُ الْخَوَارِثِينَ<sup>١٧</sup> أَعْبُرُوا الدُّنْيَا وَلَا تَعْمُرُوهَا<sup>١٨</sup> إِنِّي لَمْ أَجِدْ لَكُمْ<sup>20</sup> فِيهَا مَسْكَنًا وَاتَّخِذُوا مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ يُبُونًا وَاتَّخِذُوا بُيُوتَكُمْ مَسَاجِدًا وَكُلْ تَامِرَ وَمُرْتَحَلِ<sup>21</sup> 472 وعنه عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ يَمَعْشَرُ الْخَوَارِثِينَ<sup>١٩</sup> كُلُوا حُبَرَ الشَّعِيرِ بِالْمِلْحِ<sup>٢٠</sup> الْجَرِيشِ وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا<sup>٢١</sup> إِلَّا عَلَى شَهْوَةِ الْبُسُو عَلَى مَنْسُوجِ الشَّعْرِ وَأَخْرِجُوا مِنَ الدُّنْيَا سَالِمِينَ بِحَقِّ أَقُولُ لَكُمْ<sup>٢٢</sup> أَنَّ حَلَاوَةَ الدُّنْيَا مَرَارَةٌ فِي الْآخِرَةِ وَأَنَّ عِبَادَ اللَّهِ لَيْسُوا بِالْمُتَنَعِّمِينَ وَعَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ<sup>٢٣</sup> صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَنَّهُ قَالَ مَا ذِيبَانِ جَايِعَانِ أُرْسِلَ فِي زُرْبَةٍ<sup>٢٤</sup> غَنِمَ بِأَفْسَدِهَا مِنْ<sup>٢٥</sup> حَرْبٍ أَلْمَرُّ عَلَى الْحَالِ وَالشَّرَفُ لِدِينِهِ وَرُوحِي أَنَّهُ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَرَّ مَعَ تَقْرِ مِنْ أَصْحَابِهِ<sup>٢٦</sup> بِرِفَاقٍ<sup>٢٧</sup> مِنْ أَزَقَةٍ<sup>٢٨</sup> الْمَدِينَةِ فَذَا فِيهَا عَنَاقٌ مَيْتَةٌ مُلْقَاتٌ فَقَالَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَاللَّهِ<sup>٢٩</sup> لَلدُّنْيَا أَهْوَنُ عَلَى اللَّهِ مِنْ هَذِهِ الْعَنَاقِ عَلَى أَهْلِهَا حَتَّى أَلْفُوهَا وَلِكُونِهَا<sup>٣٠</sup> أَحْسَرُ فِي<sup>٣١</sup> هَوَانِهَا مِنَ الْجِيْفَةِ عَهَدَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِلَى صَاحِبَتِهِ وَسَايِرِ أُمَّتِهِ بِقَوْلِهِ<sup>٣٢</sup> لَيَكُنْ بِلَاغِ أَحَدِكُمْ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا كِرَادِ الرَّاكِبِ وَقَالَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مُنْقَرًا عَنْهَا إِنَّمَا مِثْلُيْهُ وَمِثْلُ<sup>٣٣</sup> الدُّنْيَا كِرَاكِبٌ تَحْتَ ظِلِّ الشَّجَرِ ثُمَّ رَاحَ وَتَرَكَهَا انْتَهَى وَلَا<sup>٣٤</sup> هَارِي إِلَّا اللَّهُ عَلَى أَنَّهُ تَعَالَى قَالَ<sup>٣٥</sup> \* فَمَنْ أَهْتَدَى فَإِنَّمَا يَهْتَدِي لِنَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ ضَلَّ فَإِنَّمَا يَضِلُّ<sup>٣٦</sup> الْآيَةُ وَحَيْثُ كَانَ كَذَلِكَ فَيَكُنْ<sup>٣٧</sup> مَعْلُومًا أَنَّنِي

<sup>a</sup> Koran 7937-39.<sup>b</sup> ms. الحيواريين.<sup>c</sup> ms. تعمروها.<sup>d</sup> ms.

الحيواريين.

<sup>e</sup> ms. الشعيري لملح.<sup>f</sup> ms. زربية.<sup>g</sup> ms.

بِرِفَاقٍ.

<sup>h</sup> ms. ازقة.<sup>i</sup> ms. ولاد.<sup>k</sup> Koran 10108.

داع الى الله وخليفة رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وأتى المهدي المنتظر<sup>13</sup> ولا فخر وقد أظهرني الله رحمة لمن طاعه واتبع سكة نبيه محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم ونقمته<sup>14</sup> على من عصاه وخالفه واتبع شيطانه ونفسه وهواه واخذ الى دنياه وقد خا<sup>15</sup> طبتك قبل هذا بإيضاح أمرى مفضلاً ودعوتك الى السلام والايمان وكان الواجب<sup>16</sup> عليك أن تعجب بالسمع والطاعة قبل أن ترى ما قد رأيت مع أن الذي أبشرت به اليك<sup>17</sup> سابقاً ليس فيه الله رشدك وصلاحك وفروقه عينك في حالك ومالك إن عقلت وعلمت<sup>18</sup> صدق مقاتلى كما هو حسن ظنى فيك وأتى ما زلت أدارجك<sup>19</sup> وأرغب لك الخير رجاء<sup>19</sup> أن يشرح الله صدرك للاسلام فتتقى الى أمر الله المالك والعلام وتكون ممن أذن<sup>20</sup> وأنقاد لرب العباد وخشى يوم التنادى\* يوم لا يغنى مؤلى عن مؤلى شيئاً<sup>21</sup> ولا جاء<sup>4731</sup> ولا مال ولا أهل ولا عيال ولا حال من الاموال بل يصدق الوعد ويحقق الوعيد كما قال جل شأنه وعز سلطانه\* فأما من أوتى كتابه يمينه فيقول هاؤم أقرأ كتابي إني ظننت<sup>3</sup> أنني ملق حساييه فلو في عيشة راضية في جنة عالية فطوفها دانية<sup>4</sup> كلوا واشربوا هنيئاً بما أسلفتم في الأيام الخالية وأما من أوتى كتابه بشماله فيقول يا ليتني لم أوت كتابي ولم أدر ما حساييه يا ليتني كنت الفاضية ما أغنى عني ماليه هلك<sup>6</sup> عني سلطانيه خذوه فغلوه ثم الجحيم صلوه ثم في سلسلة كرعها سبعون ذراعاً<sup>7</sup> فأسلکوه إته كان لا يؤمن بالله العظيم وقد بكعنى أن لك أفعلاً خيرية في الظاهر مع اهل الاسلام لأنه قال الله تعالى\* والذين كفروا أعمالهم كسراب بقيعة يحسبه الظمان ماء حتى إذا جاءه لم يجده شيئاً ووجد الله عنده فوqاه<sup>9</sup> حسابه والله<sup>10</sup> سربع الحساب أو كظلمات في بحر لحي يغشاه<sup>8</sup> موج من فوقه موج من فوقه سحاب<sup>11</sup> ظلمات بعضها فوق بعض

<sup>a</sup> ms. لا.<sup>b</sup> III stem of درج not in lexicons.<sup>c</sup> ms. التناد.<sup>d</sup> Koran 44<sup>41</sup>.<sup>e</sup> Koran 69<sup>19-33</sup>.<sup>f</sup> ms. فوفيد.<sup>g</sup> ms. يغشيه.

إِذَا أَخْرَجَ يَدَهُ لَمْ يَكْدِ يَرَاهَا<sup>a</sup> وَمَنْ لَمْ يَجْعَلِ اللَّهُ لَهُ نُورًا<sup>12</sup> فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ نُورٍ<sup>h</sup> فَرَبَّنَا عَمَلِكُ بِالْإِيمَانِ وَطَهْرُهُ مِنْ دَنَسِ الْكُفْرِ إِذْ تَكُونُ عَظِيمِ الشَّانِ<sup>13</sup> وَتَكُونُ أَعْمَالُكَ خَيْرِيَّةً ظَاهِرًا وَبَاطِنًا وَتُنْتِجُ لَكَ ثِمَرَتَهَا وَقَدْ تَطَلَّعْتَ لِأَخْبَارِنَا سَا<sup>14</sup> بَقَا بِحَيْثُ أَنَّكَ خَاطَبْتَنَا وَارْسَلْتَ إِلَيْنَا رَسُولًا وَطَلَبْتَ رَدَّ الْإِفَادَةِ فَكَانَ ذَلِكَ عِنْدِي<sup>15</sup> دَلِيلًا عَلَى أَنَّكَ أَغْفَلُ أَهْلَ دَوْلَتِكَ إِذْ لَمْ يَخَاطَبُونِي مِنْكَ مَعَ آدِ عَائِدِهِمْ<sup>e</sup> الْإِسْلَامِ<sup>16</sup> دُونَكَ وَقَدْ كُشِفَ إِلَيَّ عَيْبُهُمْ أَنَّهُمْ أَشَدَّ النَّاسِ كُفْرًا وَأَنَّهُمْ سَيِّئُ الْمَكُونِ عَلَى يَدِنَا ثَلَاثَةٌ<sup>17</sup> بَعْدَ ثَلَاثَةٍ وَقَصْدِي لَكَ النِّجَاحُ مِنْ ذَلِكَ كَيْ تَقُوزَ مَعَ الْغَائِبِينَ وَتَكُونَ مَعَ الْكَامِلِينَ الَّذِينَ<sup>18</sup> تَفَكَّرُوا\* فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ<sup>d</sup> وَعَلِمُوا بِفِرَاسَتِهِمْ قُدْرَةَ اللَّهِ وَقَالُوا\* رَبَّنَا مَا<sup>19</sup> خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَاطِلًا سُبْحَانَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ مِنْ تُوَخَّلِ النَّارِ فَقَدْ أَخْزَيْتَهُ<sup>20</sup> وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ أَنْصَارٍ رَبَّنَا إِنَّنَا سَمِعْنَا مُنَادِيًا يُنَادِي لِلْإِيمَانِ أَنْ آمِنُوا بِرَبِّكُمْ<sup>4741</sup> قَامَنَا رَبَّنَا فَاعْفُفْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَكَفِّرْ عَنَّا سَيِّئَاتِنَا وَتَوَفَّنَا مَعَ الْأَبْرَارِ رَبَّنَا وَآتِنَا مَا وَعَدْتَنَا<sup>2</sup> عَلَى رُسُلِكَ وَلَا تُخْزِنَا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّكَ لَا تُخْلِفُ الْمِيعَادَ<sup>f</sup> أَنْظَرُوا أَحْسَنَ اللَّهُ لَهُمُ الْجَابَةَ يَقُولُهُ<sup>3</sup>\* أَنِّي لَا أَضِيعُ عَمَلَ عَامِلٍ مِنْكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَى بَعْضُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْضٍ فَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا وَأُخْرِجُوا<sup>4</sup> مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَأُودُوا فِي سَبِيلِي وَقَاتَلُوا وَقُتِلُوا لَا أَكْفُرَنَّ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَلَا أَدْخِلَنَّهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ<sup>5</sup> تَجْرَى مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ ثَوَابًا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حُسْنُ الثَّوَابِ لَا يَغُرُّكَ تَقَلُّبُ<sup>6</sup> الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي الْبِلَادِ مَتَاعٌ قَلِيلٌ ثُمَّ مَا لَهُمْ<sup>e</sup> جَهَنَّمُ وَيُنْسِ الْأَعْدَاءُ لَكِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا رَبَّهُمْ لَهُمْ<sup>7</sup> جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرَى مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا نُزُلًا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لِلْأَبْرَارِ<sup>h</sup> آيَةٌ<sup>8</sup> وَإِنَّ أَجْوِبَتَكَ الَّتِي حَرَرْتَهَا لِلْفُقَرَاءِ الْمُحَاصِرِينَ وَصَلَتْ إِلَيَّ وَالَّذِي ذَكَرْتُمُوهُ مُشْعِرًا بِأَنَّكَ أَرَدْتَ الْإِدْعَانَ وَلَكِنْ مَنَعَكَ تَوْفُقُ الْعُلَمَاءِ

<sup>a</sup> ms. يريها.<sup>b</sup> Koran 24<sup>39-40</sup>.<sup>c</sup> ms. ادعيايهم.<sup>d</sup> Koran<sup>g</sup> 188.<sup>e</sup> ms. ما.<sup>f</sup> Koran 3<sup>188-192</sup>.<sup>g</sup> ms. ماويهم.<sup>h</sup> Koran<sup>g</sup> 193-197.

الذين معك وبهذا زادت شَفَقَتِي عليك<sup>10</sup> وعليهم وعلى الضعفاء  
المُحْصُورِينَ عَنَّا وَرَغِمْتُ لَهُمُ الْهَدَايَةُ جَمِيعًا وَهَمُمْتُ بِأَمْرِكُمْ  
11 قِيَامًا بِالْوَاجِبِ طَوْقِيئِهِ لِي<sup>a</sup> وَحَرَرْتُ لَكُمْ هَذَا وَهُوَ مَرْسُولُ لَكُمْ  
صُحْبَةً أَرْبَعَةً فَقُرَآءَ مِنْ<sup>12</sup> أَنْصَارِنَا الَّذِينَ بَاذِلِينَ أَرْوَاحِهِمْ لِلَّهِ طَلَبًا  
لِمَا عِنْدَهُ مِنَ الرِّضَا عَظِيمِ الْجَزَاءِ فَجَزَاهُمُ اللَّهُ خَيْرًا وَهُمْ<sup>13</sup> مُحَمَّدٌ  
أَحْمَدُ وَبَشِيرُ الَّذِي بَعَثْنَاهُمَا لَكُمْ أَوَّلًا مَعَ رَدِّ جَوَابِكُمْ وَمَعَهُمَا  
مُسْلِمَانِيَانِ وَهُمَا<sup>14</sup> مُحَمَّدٌ يَوْسُفُ وَكَيْلُكُمُ وَجَابِرُ كُنِيَّتَهُمَا فَإِنْ كَانَ لَكُمْ  
سَعَادَةٌ وَأَرَدْتُمْ قُوزَكُمْ فِي الدَّارَيْنِ يَوْمَ<sup>15</sup> صُورِ جَوَابِنَا إِلَيْكُمْ وَلِلْمَذْكُورِينَ  
بَادِرُوا إِلَى اجَابَتِنَا وَأَسْلِمُوا<sup>b</sup> قَبْلَ حُضُورِنَا وَكُونُوا مَعَهُمْ<sup>16</sup> حَالَهُ  
وَاحِدَةً حَتَّى نَاتِيَكُمْ فِي هَذَيْنِ الْيَوْمَيْنِ عَلَى الْفُورِ إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ  
تَعَالَى وَهِيَ هِيَ<sup>17</sup> جَارِي<sup>c</sup> قِيَامِنَا بِنَفْسِنَا عَلَى أَثَرِهِمْ فَعِنْدَ حُضُورِنَا  
إِذَا وَجَدْنَاكُمْ مُسْلِمِينَ فِيهَا وَإِلَّا<sup>18</sup> \*فَيَقْصِي اللَّهُ أَمْرًا كَانَ مَفْعُولًا<sup>d</sup>  
\*وَسَيَعْلَمُ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا أَيَّ مُنْقَلَبٍ يَنْقَلِبُونَ<sup>e</sup> وَأَعْلِمُ أَنَّكَ إِذَا  
أَسْلَمْتَ<sup>f</sup> كَمَا أَشَرْنَا لَكَ قَبْلَ حُضُورِنَا فَتَكُنْ أَمْنًا عَلَى نَفْسِكَ وَمَالِكَ  
وَعَا<sup>20</sup> يَلْتَكِ وَكُلُّ مَنْ مَلَكَتْ يَدَاكَ مِنْ قَلِيلٍ وَكَثِيرٍ مَا عَدَا حَقَّ  
الْمِيرَى الْمَخْصُوصِ بِهِ فَهُوَ غَنِيمَةٌ<sup>4751</sup> وَكُلُّ مَنْ يُسَلِّمُ مَعَكَ مِنْ  
الْمَسِيحِيِّينَ<sup>g</sup> كَذَلِكَ أَمْنٌ عَلَى هَذَا الشَّرْطِ الَّذِي حُرِّرَ<sup>h</sup> آتِنَا وَقَدْ  
آمَنَّاكُمْ عَلَى ذَلِكَ جَمِيعَكُمْ بِأَمَانِ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَأَمَانِ الْعَبْدِ لِلَّهِ  
فَأَحْقَقْنَا كَمَاءَكُمْ<sup>3</sup> وَصَوْنُوا أَعْرَاضَكُمْ وَأَمْوَالَكُمْ وَلَا تَغْرَبْكُمْ كَثْرَةُ الْعَدَدِ  
وَالْمَدَدِ وَالْخَيْلِ<sup>i</sup> الَّتِي هِيَ مُعَوَّلُكُمْ<sup>4</sup> وَمُعَوَّلُنَا اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ لَا  
تُقَادَرُ قُدْرَتُهُ وَلَا يَنْهَضُهُ جُنْدُهُ كَيْفَ \* وَهُوَ الْحَكِيمُ<sup>5</sup> الْخَبِيرُ<sup>k</sup> وَإِنَّمَا يَلْزَمُنَا  
الْوَفَاءُ بِالْعَهْدِ إِذْ عَلَّمْتُمْ بِمُقْتَضَى جَوَابِنَا وَإِلَّا فَلَا وَقَدْ تَحَرَّرَ مِنَّا<sup>6</sup> إِلَى  
عَامِلِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ عَثْمَانَ أَبِي<sup>1</sup> قَرْجَةَ بِالتَّوَصِيَةِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَأَكْذَبْنَا عَلَيْهِ بَأْنَ  
يُعَامِلُكُمْ حَسْبَ أَمَانِنَا فَإِنْ قَدَفَ اللَّهُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ نَارَ الْإِيمَانِ وَاطْمَآنَنْتُمْ

<sup>a</sup> ms. sic ؟ الله <sup>b</sup> ms. وسلموا. <sup>c</sup> ms. .اجارى. <sup>d</sup> Koran  
843, 46. <sup>e</sup> Koran 26<sup>288</sup>. <sup>f</sup> ms. سلمت. <sup>g</sup> ms. المسيحيين.  
<sup>h</sup> ms. حر. <sup>i</sup> ms. الخيل. <sup>k</sup> Koran 6<sup>18</sup>, 73; 34<sup>1</sup>. <sup>—</sup> ms. ابو.



بالرحمن فَأَخْرُجُوا لِلْمَذْكُورِ وَقَاهُ<sup>8</sup> بِدَوَاهِهِ بِوَاسِطَةِ الْفُقَرَاءِ الْمُرْسُولِينَ  
وَلَا تُسَوِّفُوا كَمَا سَابِقًا<sup>9</sup> بِاتِّبَاعِ الْمُضِلِّينَ خُصُوصًا<sup>9</sup> عُلَمَاءَ الشَّوْءِ فَقَدْ  
وَرَدَ إِذَا رَأَيْتُمْ الْعَالَمَ يُحِبُّ الدُّنْيَا فَاتَّبِعُوا عَلَى دِينِكُمْ فَلَا تَسْمَعُوا لَهُ<sup>10</sup>  
نَصِيحَةً مَا دَامَ إِلَهُكُمْ يُحِبُّونَ الدُّنْيَا فَمَا هُمْ إِلَّا كِلَابٌ وَلِقَوْلِهِ صَلَّى  
اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ الدُّنْيَا<sup>11</sup> جِيْفَةٌ وَطَلَّابُهَا كِلَابٌ وَإِنْ رَضُوا<sup>11</sup> أَوْ لَا فَأَمْرُ  
اللَّهِ تَعَالَى نَافِدٌ عَلَى رَغْمِ أَنْوْفِهِمْ فَأُولَى<sup>12</sup> لَهُمْ طَاعَةٌ وَقَوْلُ مَعْرُوفٍ  
وَلَوْ صَدَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ وَلَوْ لَا أَنَّى عَلَى نُورِ اللَّهِ<sup>13</sup> وَتَأْيِيدٍ مِنْ  
رَسُولِهِ<sup>14</sup> صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لَمَا كَعَوْتُ أَحَدًا وَلَا سَاغَ لِي أَنْ أَحْكِيَ  
شَيْئًا وَلَا<sup>14</sup> اِشْتَغَلْتُ بِهَذَا الْأَمْرِ الَّذِي أَنَا بَعْنْدَهُ سَاعَةٌ مَا وَهَذَا اِئْتِدَارُ  
لَكُمْ فَاسْمَعُوا وَانْيَبُوا<sup>15</sup> إِلَى رَبِّكُمْ وَاسْلَمُوا لَهُ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَكُمُ  
الْعَذَابُ ثُمَّ لَا تُنْصَرُونَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُظِلُّ النَّاسَ شَيْئًا<sup>16</sup> وَلَكِنَّ النَّاسَ  
أَنْفُسَهُمْ يُظِلُّونَ فَإِيَّاكُمْ أَنْ تَكُونُوا<sup>17</sup> ظَالِمِينَ فَتَنْدَمُوا مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا  
يَنْفَعُكُمْ<sup>17</sup> التَّوَكُّلُ وَالسَّعِيدُ مَنْ اتَّقَعَ بِغَيْرِهِ وَبَادَرَ إِلَى خَيْرِهِ فَهَيَّاهِيَا  
إِلَى النِّجَاحِ قَبْلَ قَضِ<sup>18</sup> الْجَنَاحِ وَالسَّلَامَ عَلَى مَنْ اتَّبَعَ الْهُدَى وَالسَّلَامَ.

### Translation

470<sup>18</sup> In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate! Praise belongs to God, the Generous Patron, and prayer with peace upon our Lord Muhammad and his family.

<sup>19</sup> From the Servant, humble in the eyes of his Lord, Muhammad al Mahdi ibn as Sayyid Abdullah to the representative of Britain and of the Khedive <sup>20</sup> Gordon Pasha.

We hereby inform you that God (Praise belongs to him the Most High) in his patience and generosity is long suffering, but he does not neglect and he does not turn aside <sup>21</sup> his wrath from the guilty people, and he is the patron of the believers. The Most High said: God is the patron of those who believe; he leads them out 471<sup>1</sup> of darkness into light; but they who do not believe, their patrons are demons who lead them from light into darkness;

<sup>a</sup> ms. سبق.

<sup>b</sup> ms. لهم.

<sup>c</sup> ms. رضيو.

<sup>d</sup> ms. رسول.

<sup>e</sup> ms. احد.

<sup>f</sup> ms. تكوا.

<sup>2</sup>they are fellows of the fire, in which they shall remain for ever."<sup>a</sup>

He has pointed out [the true way of life] in the glorious Koran and others of his ancient books and <sup>3</sup>by the tongue of every apostle, prophet, and faithful devotee, censuring this world and making the wise wary of it. He has called them <sup>4</sup>to the hereafter and incited them to it, for it is the house of continuance, strength, glory, great honor, the exalted place, <sup>5</sup>the sublime abode, and the pleasant life. Just as the word of the Most High points out in regard to all this: "Know that this present life is only <sup>6</sup>a toy, a plaything, a vain amusement, a source of rivalry among you, and a striving for increase of property and children. It is like a rain-growth whose vegetation pleases the unbelievers, <sup>7</sup>then it withers away and you may see it turn yellow and finally it becomes dry stubble. But in the hereafter [there will be] a severe punishment [for those who seek the glory of this world]; and pardon from <sup>8</sup>God, and favor [for those who renounce it]. The life of this world is only a deceitful provision. Hasten with emulation after pardon from your Lord, and Paradise, the extent of which <sup>9</sup>equals the extent of heaven and earth, prepared for those who believe in God and his apostles. This is the bounty of God which he will give <sup>10</sup>to whom he pleases and God is endowed with great bounty."<sup>b</sup>

One who is guided aright as to the signs knowns that he who acknowledges the truth of the <sup>11</sup>belief in God and his Apostle is very near to God, he must attain his desire, he will get his reward and be given <sup>12</sup>what souls like and eyes delight in. Verily no one can escape his punishment and penalty and every evil <sup>13</sup>of this world and the next except through him [God] together with great fear of his [God's] wrath and renunciation of this world and its life <sup>14</sup>and of any reliance upon it. It is transitory, base, deceitful, treacherous. There is no peace in it, and no pleasure <sup>15</sup>in comparison with the great good which is with God in the abode of joy. But whoever loves this world and cherishes it above the <sup>16</sup>next, God will cast him headlong into everlasting hell, as the word of the Most High says: "And he who has transgressed and

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<sup>a</sup> Koran 2258-259.

<sup>b</sup> Koran 5719-21.

has chosen this present life; <sup>17</sup> verily hell shall be his abode.”<sup>a</sup> So it is plain that there is no profit in the honor of this world and in its life, wealth and <sup>18</sup> property, but only prolonged regret in the hereafter. To this effect there has come down from Jesus, son of Mary (upon our prophet and upon Him <sup>19</sup> be the blessing of God and his peace) the saying: “Oh company of disciples! Pass through this world, but make not your abode in it. Verily I have not found for you <sup>20</sup> in it an abiding place. Take the temples of God as [your] house and take your houses as temples, every one of you also the traveler.” 471<sup>1</sup> And from Him (upon whom be peace) [is the following]: “Oh company of disciples! Eat barley-bread with coarse salt, but do not eat except when hungry. Put on garments made of woven hair-cloth and go out from this world saved. Verily I tell you <sup>3</sup> the sweets of this world are bitter in the next and the servants of God are not those who live in worldly pleasure.”

And from the Apostle of God <sup>4</sup> (God bless him and give him peace): “Two hungry wolves let into a sheep-cote would not do more damage to it than <sup>5</sup> the desire of man for condition and high station does to his religion.”

It is told that he (God bless him and give him peace) was walking along with a number of his companions <sup>6</sup> in one of the streets of Medina when they came upon a dead goat cast aside in it. So he said (God bless him and give him peace) “By Allah, <sup>7</sup> Surely this world is more despised by God than this goat by its owners to cast it aside.” And because it is more <sup>8</sup> despised than a carcass, the Apostle of God (God bless him and give him peace) enjoined upon his companions and the rest of his people his word: <sup>9</sup> “Let that of this world which satisfies any one of you be like the provisions of a traveller.” And he said (God bless him and give him peace) in giving warning against it: “It may be likened to two things. [The second is that] <sup>10</sup> this world is like the condition of a traveller under the shade of a tree, then he goes away and leaves it.”

There is no guide except God, as also the Most High said: <sup>11</sup> “He therefore who is directed, will be directed to the advantage of his own soul, but he who errs, he will err.”<sup>b</sup>

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<sup>a</sup> Koran 79<sup>37-39</sup>.

<sup>b</sup> Koran 10<sup>108</sup>.

Since this is so, then it is <sup>12</sup> plain that I am the one who invites to God, and the Khalifa of the Apostle of God (God bless him and give him peace) and that I am the Mahdi, the expected one, <sup>13</sup> and this is no boast.

God has authorized me to proclaim mercy upon whosoever obeys him and follows the direction of his prophet Muhammad (God bless him and give him peace), and vengeance <sup>14</sup> upon whosoever rebels against him and disobeys him and follows his devil, his own inclination and desire, and cleaves to this world. I have ad<sup>15</sup>ressed you before this explaining my condition in detail and have invited you to Islam and the faith. You should <sup>16</sup> have answered with submission and obedience before you had seen what you have seen. And, what is more, that which I told you <sup>17</sup> before was only to guide you aright, and for the sake of your peace and happiness in your condition and your property, if you had known and understood <sup>18</sup> the truth of what I said. How good my intention towards you was! And I have not ceased trying to promote your welfare and wishing you good in the hope <sup>19</sup> that God might open your breast to Islam and that you might turn to the command of God, the king, the all knowing, and that you might be one of those who submit themselves <sup>20</sup> and yield to the Lord of servants and who fear the day of judgement, "a day whereon the master and the servant will be of no avail to one another,"<sup>a</sup> nor rank, <sup>4731</sup> nor property, nor household, nor family, nor condition of wealth. But the promise is true and the threat reliable as <sup>2</sup> he who is great in rank and strong in power said: "And he into whose right hand his book shall be given, will say: 'Take, read my book; verily I thought <sup>3</sup> that I should be brought to my account.' His shall be a pleasant life in a lofty garden whose fruits shall be near at hand. <sup>4</sup> Eat and drink with enjoyment, because of what you have sent before you in the days which are passed. But he into whose left hand his book shall be given, will say <sup>5</sup> Would that I had not received this book and that I had not known what my account is! Would that I had died! My riches do not profit me and my power is gone <sup>6</sup> from me.' Take him and bind him and cast him into the fire to be burned, then put him into a chain

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<sup>a</sup> Koran 44<sup>41</sup>.

of the length of seventy cubits <sup>7</sup> because he believed not in the Great God."<sup>a</sup>

And it has been reported to me that your deeds are good externally <sup>8</sup> with the people of Islam. But God the Most High said: "But the unbelievers, their works are like the mirage in a plain, which the thirsty [traveller] thinks <sup>9</sup> is water, until, when he comes to it, he finds it nothing; but he finds God with him and he will fully pay him his account, <sup>10</sup> and God is swift in taking account; or, as the darkness in a deep sea, covered by waves on waves, above which are clouds, <sup>11</sup> being darkness one above the other, when one stretches forth his hand, he can scarcely see it. And unto whomsoever God does not grant light, <sup>12</sup> he enjoys no light at all."<sup>b</sup>

So adorn your work with faith and cleanse it from the pollution of unbelief, since you will then become high in position <sup>13</sup> and your works will become good externally and internally, and the fruits thereof will be yours.

You have gone to the pains of making inquiry in regard to us <sup>14</sup> formerly in that you addressed us and sent us a messenger and asked return of the embassy;<sup>c</sup> and this is to me <sup>15</sup> evidence that you are the wisest of the people of your government since they have not addressed me as you have with their profession of Islam. <sup>16</sup> You alone are excepted. But their wickedness has been revealed to me, that they are the worst of men in unbelief; and they shall perish at my hand company after <sup>17</sup> company. But my desire for you is escape from this so that you may be safe with those who are safe and that you may be of the perfect who <sup>18</sup> ponder "upon the creation of heaven and earth"<sup>d</sup> and who understand in their sagacity the power of God and they say: "Oh Lord, By no means <sup>19</sup> have you created this in vain, Praise be to thee, deliver us from the torment of hell, Oh Lord! Verily, whom you cast into hell, him you cover with shame, <sup>20</sup> and assuredly the evil-doers have no helpers. Lord, we have heard a crier summoning to the faith, saying, Believe in your Lord! 474<sup>1</sup> We believe, Oh Lord, so pardon us our faults and wipe away from us our evils and receive us among the pious, Oh Lord, and give us what you have promised us <sup>21</sup> by your apostles and do not cover us

<sup>a</sup> Koran 69<sup>19-33</sup>.

<sup>b</sup> Koran 24<sup>39-40</sup>.

<sup>c</sup> See Remark 2.

<sup>d</sup> Koran 3<sup>188</sup>.

with shame on the day of resurrection. Verily, you do not abandon the promises."<sup>a</sup>

See how gracious is the answer of God to them in his word: <sup>3</sup>"I will not permit the work of him among you who works to be lost, whether it be male or female; the one of you is from the other. They therefore who have left their country and have been turned out <sup>4</sup>of their houses and have suffered for my sake and have been slain in battle; verily I will wipe out their evil deeds from them, and I will surely bring them into gardens <sup>5</sup>through which rivers flow, a reward from God and with God is the most excellent reward. Let not the success <sup>6</sup>of the unbelievers in the land deceive you, it is but a slender provision and then their receptacle shall be hell, an unpleasant couch. But they who fear the Lord shall have <sup>7</sup>gardens through which rivers flow, they shall dwell therein forever. This is the gift of God, for what is with God will be better for the righteous."<sup>b</sup>

The reply which you have written to the dervishes who are shut up has come to me and he whom you mention giving information that <sup>9</sup>you desire submission, but the interference of the counsellors who are with you hinders you.<sup>c</sup> On this account my pity increases for you <sup>10</sup>and for them and for the weak<sup>d</sup> who are shut up from me, and I wish for them all right guidance.

I have thought about your condition, standing <sup>11</sup>by the obligation God has imposed upon me, and I have written to you this [letter] and it is sent to you by four dervishes of our helpers who have freely given themselves to God in seeking for the joy which is with him, and great is the reward and God will reward them well. They are <sup>13</sup>Muhammad Aḥmad and Bašîr, those whom we sent to you in the first place with the reply to your letter, and with them are two Muslims, <sup>14</sup>Muhammad Yusuf, your lieutenant, and Jâbir (these are their names).<sup>e</sup> So if you choose prosperity and desire your salvation in the two abodes, [then] on <sup>15</sup>the arrival of our answer to you and to the [others] named, hasten to reply to us and submit yourself before our arrival and be with them<sup>f</sup>

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<sup>a</sup> Koran 3188-192.

<sup>b</sup> Koran 3193-197.

<sup>c</sup> See Remark 2.

<sup>d</sup> See Remark 3.

<sup>e</sup> See Remark 4.

<sup>f</sup> See Remark 5.

<sup>16</sup>in one state until we arrive in two days in haste, if God the Most High wishes, and behold he is <sup>17</sup>my protector.

My intention is personally to hasten after them. So if, on our arrival, we find you Muslim then all will be well; but if not <sup>18</sup>“then God will accomplish what is decreed”.<sup>a</sup> “And they who do wrong shall know with what treatment they shall be treated in the hereafter.”<sup>b</sup>

<sup>19</sup>So know that if you submit yourself, as we have advised you, before our arrival, then our pledge of safety will be for you, your property, <sup>20</sup>your household, and everything which your hands control, both little and great, excepting the special perquisite of the Ameer as that is a booty. 475<sup>1</sup> And whoever of the Christians who are with you that submits himself likewise is safe upon this condition which we have just written. <sup>2</sup>We pledge you safety upon this condition, all of you, with the pledge of God and his Apostle, and the pledge of the servant of God. So put an end to the shedding of your blood, <sup>3</sup>and look to your lives and property, and let not the greatness of your number, the assistance and the army upon which you rely, deceive you. <sup>4</sup>Our reliance is God, than whom there is no other. His might cannot be measured and his army cannot be defeated. How could it be, seeing that he is “the Wise and <sup>5</sup>the Knowing”?<sup>c</sup> The fulfillment of the covenant is surely binding upon us as soon as you agree to the conditions in our reply, otherwise not.

A letter has been sent by us to our agent Muhammad Othman Abu Kerjah with orders in regard to you and we have authorized him to deal with you in accordance with our <sup>7</sup>pledge.

So if God has put into your heart the light of faith and you continue in grace, then go out to the said man and have a <sup>8</sup>conference with him through the mediation of the dervishes who are sent and do not delay, as formerly, in following the erring ones, especially <sup>9</sup>the evil counsellors.

[The saying] has come down: “When you see a wise man loving this world, be suspicious of him as to his position in regard to your religion, and do not ever listen to him <sup>10</sup>in any advice of his.” Verily they love this world and are nothing

<sup>a</sup> Koran 843, 46.

<sup>b</sup> Koran 26228.

<sup>c</sup> Koran 618, 73; 341.

but dogs. His word is (God bless him and give him peace): "This world <sup>11</sup>is a carcass and those who desire it are dogs." Whether they like or not, the command of God, the Most High, is executed inspite of them. So the first demand <sup>12</sup>upon them is obedience and a reasonable reply. If they believe in God, surely it is well for them.

And were it not for the fact that I have the light of God <sup>13</sup>and the authorization of his Apostle (God bless him and give him peace) I would not have invited any one; nor would it be fitting that I say anything nor <sup>14</sup>busy myself with the matter, for a moment even.

This is a warning to you, so hearken and turn <sup>15</sup>to your Lord and submit yourself to him before punishment comes upon you. Then you will not be helped.

Verily God does not injure man in anything, <sup>16</sup>but man injures himself. So beware lest you injure yourself and repent when <sup>17</sup>repentance avails not.

Happy is the man who is warned by another and hastens to his own good. So come to salvation before your wings are clipped.

Peace be upon him who follows the right guidance.

### Remarks.

*Remark 1.* The letter is not dated in the manuscript. From the sources available it appears that Gordon received only three formal letters from the Mahdi. At least no reference to any others has been found. Of these three the first one, which was received by Gordon March 22, 1884, is translated in full in Major (now Sirdar) Wingate's book: *Mahdism and the Egyptian Sudan* (1891) pp. 111—115, and is dated March 10, 1884.<sup>a</sup> The second letter was received by Gen. Gordon Sept. 9, 1884, the day before the steamer "Abbas" was sent down the Nile.<sup>b</sup> It together with the other documents was lost in the wreck of the "Abbas". The third letter was received

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<sup>a</sup> In Boulger's *Life of Gordon*, London 1896, vol. ii. p. 136: "Even the Mahdi himself made his contribution to the general tribute, by sending Gen. Gordon on his arrival a formal 'salaam' or message of respect." Gordon arrived at Khartoum Feb. 18, 1884.

<sup>b</sup> *Gordon's Journals*, Sept. 11. The references to Gordon's Journals are made to "The Journals of Major Gen. C. G. Gordon, C. B. at Khartoum" edited by a Egmont Hake, Boston, 1885.



by Gordon Oct. 22, 1884,<sup>a</sup> and is translated in full in Appendix U pp. 453—459 of the "Journals". This last letter tells of the wreck of the "Abbas" on Sept. 18, 1884.

This points at once to our letter as the one Gordon received Sept. 9, and which was lost in the wreck of the "Abbas"; but as there is a possibility of other letters of which no mention has been found, further proof is necessary.

The letter which Gordon received on Sept. 9 was sent by means of two Muslims and some dervishes.<sup>b</sup> The names of the two Muslims as given in Ibrahim's letter are Mohammed Yusuf and George Calamantino; and as given in the manuscript letter are Muhammad Yusuf and Jâbir. In a letter from Abd-er-Rahman en-Nejumi,<sup>c</sup> el-Jâbir is identified with George Calamantino. The letter referred to in Gordon's Journals as being received on Sept. 9 and the manuscript letter were sent by the same messengers.

Muhammad Yusuf was the Italian Giuseppe Cuzzi.<sup>d</sup> Cuzzi was taken captive at the fall of Berber, May 26, 1884, and sent to Abu Kerjah, who was in command of the besiegers of Khartoum. Abu Kerjah tried through the mediation of Cuzzi to induce Gordon to surrender, and failing in this he sent him to the Mahdi at Rahad.<sup>e</sup> The Mahdi sent him back to Khartoum together with George Calamantino with letters for Gordon. In his Journal for Sept. 11 Gordon says: "Soon after Cuzzi had left for the Arab camp two dervishes came in with the Mahdi's letter." The facts seem to be that, when the messengers from the Mahdi arrived at the Arab camp besieging Khartoum, Cuzzi for some reason or other wanted to get into Khartoum before the letter was delivered, and as soon as he returned to the camp the letter was sent in. As stated in Gordon's Journal, Sept. 11, there is some discrepancy in the account, for he says Cuzzi came into the city "yesterday" i. e. Sept. 10, while

<sup>a</sup> See *Gordon's Journals*, Oct. 22.

<sup>b</sup> See the letter of Ibrahim Abd el-Kâder in App. A to *Gordon's Journals*, p. 371, which is dated Sept. 9, 1884; and cp. the manuscript letter p. 474 l. 11, 13, and 14.

<sup>c</sup> App. A 2 to *Gordon's Journals*, p. 374.

<sup>d</sup> *Gordon's Journals*, Sept. 13.

<sup>e</sup> R. C. Slatin: *Fire and Sword in the Sudan, 1879—1895*. p. 305. Father Joseph Ohrwalder: *Ten Years Captivity in the Mahdi's Camp*, p. 125 f. Rahad is about 200 miles south of Khartoum.

he says the letter was received Sept. 9. Slatin says<sup>a</sup> that Calamantino was admitted into the city but Cuzzi refused admittance. It may be that Cuzzi incurred Gordon's suspicion, and was refused permission to come into Khartoum a second time.

The Mahdi says in the manuscript letter that he has authorized Abu Kerjah to treat with Gordon.<sup>b</sup> Gordon says in his Journals for Sept. 13: "Mahdi proposes that I should put myself on my surrender (!) under Abou Gugliz, who is a notorious breaker of the dervish rules." And in a letter from Gordon to Abd-er-Rahmân is the following: "Mahomed Achmed informs us that he ordered Abou Kerjah to convert us to his faith.<sup>c</sup> The letter is dated 2nd Zu'l Hejjeh 1301; Aug. 24, 1884.<sup>d</sup> In Gordon's Journals Abu Kerjah is consistently called Abou Gugliz.

The following, which undoubtedly refers to our letter and is a good summary of it, is taken from a letter from Abd-er-Rahmân en-Nejumi to Gordon.<sup>e</sup> This letter has no date, but it was received by Gordon Sept. 21. It says: "The Imam has written to thee the truth in leading thee to God; and also that which concerns thy salvation and that of those with thee and how thou mayest attain salvation in this world and in the next."

The above evidence points clearly to our letter as the one that Gordon received Sept. 9, 1884.

It is impossible to determine the date on which the letter was written. It must have been after June, 1884, and probably before the Mahdi left Rahad, which according to Ohrwalder was Aug. 8, and according to Slatin Aug. 22. Both Ohrwalder and Slatin are very sparing in giving exact dates.

*Remark 2.* Just what the reference in ms. letter p. 473 l. 14 is, is not evident. It may be that Cuzzi when he came to the Mahdi represented himself as a messenger from Gordon, and told the Mahdi that he was authorized to tell him that Gordon would surrender if he dared, but that the Ulema of Khartoum prevented him.<sup>f</sup> The Mahdi calls Cuzzi in the

<sup>a</sup> Slatin, *F. and S. in Sudan*, p. 304—305.

<sup>b</sup> Vide ms. letter 474 l. 6.

<sup>c</sup> App. M to *Gordon's Journals* p. 397.

<sup>d</sup> Aug. 24 is wrong; it should be Sept. 23.

<sup>e</sup> App. L to *Gordon's Journals*, p. 392.

<sup>f</sup> Ms. letter 475 l. 9.

letter "your wakīl" (lieutenant).<sup>a</sup> It is impossible that Gordon should ever have offered to surrender and turn Muslim. Cuzzi may have presented things thus to the Mahdi to gain his favor. Ohrwalder says that the Mahdi received him well, loaded him with presents and then sent him back to Gordon with a letter.

Giuseppe Cuzzi had been English Consular Agent at Berber. Shortly before the fall of Berber (May 26, 1884) Cuzzi had been dismissed by Sir Evelyn Baring (now Lord Cromer) for criticizing Baring's plan of opening the road from Suakin to Berber. Gordon therefore thought that Cuzzi had betrayed Berber to the Arabs for revenge. Neither Slatin nor Ohrwalder say anything about Cuzzi as being a traitor, but circumstantial evidence is against him. For after the fall of Berber Cuzzi was sent to Abu Kerjah who was besieging Khartoum. Abu Kerjah sent him to Gordon to induce him to surrender but failed. He was then sent to the Mahdi who received him so well. After the letter had been delivered to Gordon Cuzzi went again to Berber. He evidently had more freedom than Slatin or Ohrwalder. The probability too that he entered Khartoum alone before the letter was delivered points to some double dealing on his part — whether he was plotting against Khartoum or simply working to save himself is hard to tell. If Cuzzi was such a man, it is easy to believe that he posed before the Mahdi as an agent of Gordon. This would also give a good reason why the Mahdi should write this letter. The other two letters were written, each of them, because of some special reason — the first one in answer to Gordon's letter appointing the Mahdi Sultan of Kordofan, and the other to tell Gordon about the capture of the steamer "Abbas".

It may also be that the reference is to the first messages which Gen. Gordon sent to the Mahdi making overtures to him and appointing him governor of Kordofan, the first step in carrying out the British-Egyptian policy of evacuating the Sudan and withdrawing the Egyptian troops. That was what Gordon had been sent to the Sudan to do.

*Remark 3.* By the "weak"<sup>b</sup> were probably meant the wives and children left behind in Khartoum by Muhammadans who

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<sup>a</sup> Ms. letter 474 l. 14.

<sup>b</sup> Ms. letter 474 l. 10.

had gone out to the Mahdi and submitted themselves to him. This was a cool piece of calculation on the part of these men; for, if Gordon held out till the English came, their families and property were safe, should the Mahdi succeed in taking Khartoum they could rely upon their fidelity in the Mahdi's cause to protect their families and property. Because Gordon permitted this he is criticized severely by Father Ohrwalder<sup>a</sup> who maintains that the ethics of war are not those of peace and had Gordon driven these "weak ones" out he would have saved on his food supplies and have been able to hold out longer. It was at no time Gordon's policy to hinder those who wished to go out to the Mahdi. He would not, however, permit those who went out to come back again. The men who went may have told the Mahdi that the reason they did not take their families with them was that Gordon would not permit them to do so.

During the siege there were several attempts at conspiracy which Gordon nipped, putting the leaders in prison. The reference may be to such men.

*Remark 4.* In the letter there are five persons mentioned by name:<sup>b</sup> Muhammad Aḥmad, Bašir, Muhammad Yusuf, Jâbir, and Abu Ḳerjah. Muhammad Aḥmad and Bašir are spoken of as having been the messengers who brought the letter of March 10, 1884. Muhammad Aḥmad is too common a name to be easily identified. There is a Muhammad Aḥmad wad el Bedri who is called by Ohrwalder<sup>c</sup> one of the Mahdi's early and favorite adherents. Wad el Bešir is mentioned by Ohrwalder<sup>d</sup> as being sent by the Mahdi to head the revolt of the tribes of Gezireh which is between the Blue and White Niles. Slatin<sup>e</sup> also mentions this man and calls him a brother-in-law of the Mahdi. Ohrwalder calls him a son-in-law of the Mahdi. These two men are probably the ones referred to in the letter.

Muhammad Yusuf is Giuseppe Cuzzi, and Jabir is the Greek George Calamantino.<sup>f</sup> Abu Ḳerjah's name is spelled variously Abou Gurgy, Abu Girgeh, and Abu Girgah. He is also called

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<sup>a</sup> Ohrwalder op. ci. p. 152.

<sup>b</sup> Ms. letter p. 474 l. 13. 14 and p. 475 l. 6.

<sup>c</sup> Op. cit., p. 10.      <sup>d</sup> Op. cit., p. 94.

<sup>e</sup> Slatin, op cit., p. 280.      <sup>f</sup> Cp. Remark 1.

Abou Gugliz. His full name is Hajji Muhammad Osman (or Othman) Abu Kerjah. Abu Kerjah is written *أبو قرجه*. In Egypt both *ق* and *ج* are pronounced as hard *g*. Gordon's name is spelled in two ways: *جوردن* and *غردون*.

*Remark 5.* Ms. letter, p. 474 l. 16. At first glance this seems to give a clue to the date of the writing of the letter; but, if the letter was written before the Mahdi left Rahad, it would mean that the Mahdi expected to reach Khartoum two days after the messengers with the letter did. There is no means at hand for determining how long it would take the messengers to cover the distance of about two hundred miles between Rahad and Khartoum. It would seem from this that the letter must have been written some time in August — probably after the middle — which would point to Slatin's date of Aug. 22 for the Mahdi's departure from Rahad as the correct one.

*Remark 6.* In the Appendix to Book III. of Major Wingate's book: *Mahdism and the Sudan*, pp. 535—549, there is a tabulated list of the letters and proclamations of the Mahdi and his successor Khalifa Abdullah Taashi which are contained in a manuscript captured at the battle of Toski, Aug. 3, 1889. In this battle the English completely routed the Arabs, and their general en-Nejumi, the man who was chief in command of the Arabs besieging Khartoum from September on, was slain. In this list of letters there are two given from the Mahdi to Gordon, pp. 24—26 and 26—28 of the letter-book. The date given is Jumada el-Awal 1301, Christian date 1885 (sic). It should of course be March 1884. These letters (the two are one letter with a short postscript of six or seven lines, as can readily be seen by comparing the résumé of the contents with the letter itself) are translated in full in the body of Wingate's book, pp. 111—115. There are in this letter-book one hundred thirty three letters, ninety-nine of which are from the Mahdi. The book contains one hundred forty or more pages, of which pages 33—38 are missing. There is no chronological arrangement of the letters, which run from 1881 to 1888.

*Remark 7.* In regard to *عليه السلام*.

In his "Régistre", Count Landberg says: "Que le manuscrit date d'une époque postérieure à la mort du Mahdi, est prouvé parce qu'on trouve parfois après son nom les mots *عليه السلام*."

This is hardly sufficient proof, for the use of the phrase after the Mahdi's name is found in letters clearly written before his death. There is a document, given as Appendix D to *Gordon's Journals*, which is an answer written by the Ulema of Khar-toum to the Sheikh Abdel Kader Ibrahim and to Wad en-Nejoomi, dated 23rd Zu'l Kada, 1301, Sept. 14, 1884. In this document (op. cit., p. 379) the Ulema complain that the followers of the Mahdi use this phrase in connection with his name. That the fact is so, can be seen from Appendix L. to the *Journals*, a letter from Abderrahman en Najoomi and Abdallah en Noor to Gordon Pasha, where the phrase is used after the word "Mahdi". The examples of its use in this way could be multiplied. The Ulema say that Abd el-Ghani en-Nablusi said in his book, the Hadik en-Nadih: "No one ought to be distinguished by the Salaam excepting the prophets, for one cannot say, 'Ali, on whom be peace'; and this rule applies both to living and dead alike, excepting that a person present may be addressed thereby, for people say, 'Peace be upon thee'.<sup>a</sup> In a footnote to the same page: "Peace be on him", the usual formula of salutation to a true believer if alive, and used of prophets when their names are mentioned.

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<sup>a</sup> Op. cit., p 379.